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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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EXAMINER	
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ART UNIT	**PAPER NUMBER**
3626	

DATE MAILED: 10/05/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/864,891	NG ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Mike Tomaszewski	3626	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE *3* MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on *30 June 2006*.

2a)☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b)☐ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) *8-54* is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) *8-54* is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☒ The drawing(s) filed on *5/24/2001* is/are: a)☒ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a)☐ All b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

1.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ .
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Notice To Applicant

1. This communication is in response to the amendment filed on 6/30/06. Claims 1-7 have been canceled. Claims 8, 31, and 43 have been amended. Claims 8-54 remain pending.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

2. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. Claims 1-54 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Fletcher-Haynes et al. (US 2001/0034614; hereinafter Fletcher), in view of Otworth (et al. (US 2002/0059030; hereinafter Otworth), as applied to the previous Office Action and incorporated herein.

(A) As per currently amended claim 8, Fletcher discloses a system for managing inventory of blood component collection soft goods and for preventing the use of quarantined soft goods, the system comprising:

(a) a blood component collection instrument for collecting a blood component from a blood component donor in a blood component soft good (Fletcher: par. [0056] and [0125]; Examiner notes, in particular, that Fletcher teaches that the blood/blood components are collected into "bags" via "tubing sets" (i.e., "blood component soft goods" or "the container or kit which holds the collected blood component," as defined by Applicant on pg. 14 of Applicant's response filed 6/30/2006));

(b) a system computer being operably connected to the blood component collection instrument (Fletcher: par. [0057]), the system computer running a blood component collection application for at least a portion of a blood component collection process (Fletcher: par. [0057]), wherein the system computer is in data communication with a system database having a blood component collection soft good inventory (Fletcher: par. [0056], [0063], and [0195]) (Examiner considers a blood component (e.g., platelets, red blood cells, stem cells, white blood cells, plasma) to read on "blood component collection soft good."); and,

(c) an interface being operably connected to the system computer (Fletcher: par. [0057]).

Examiner notes that Fletcher teaches the use of a multitude of graphical user interfaces (GUIs) having numerous fields for a indicating a variety of things including blood component inventory levels, machine identification numbers, blood collection bag identification numbers, blood component collection volumes, tubing set identification numbers, ad nauseum (Fletcher: Figs. 2A-6M). As such, Examiner considers GUIs having various inventory indication fields to be notoriously well known.

Fletcher, however fails to expressly disclose a system for managing inventory of blood component collection soft goods and for preventing the use of quarantined soft goods, the system comprising:

(d) the interface having a [*quarantine field]* for indicating that at least a portion of the blood component collection soft good inventory is [*quarantined*].

Nevertheless, this feature (i.e, quarantining) is old and well known in the art, as evidenced by Otworth. In particular, Otworth discloses a system for managing inventory of blood component collection soft goods and for preventing the use of quarantined soft goods, the system comprising:

(d) the interface having a quarantine field for indicating that at least a portion of the blood component collection soft good inventory is quarantined (Otworth: par. [0222]; Fig. 16).

One of ordinary skill would have found it obvious at the time of the invention to combine the teachings of Otworth (e.g., quarantining, in particular) with the teachings of Fletcher (e.g., interfaces, having various inventory fields, operably connected to the system computer) with the motivation of more efficiently monitoring and controlling inventories of products (e.g., soft goods) (Otworth: par. [0028]).

(B) As per original claim 9, Fletcher discloses the system of claim 8, wherein the interface communicates to the system database an identification of the soft goods (Fletcher: par. [0022], [0083], [0125], and [0162]) (Examiner notes also that Fletcher teaches the use of various GUI comment fields whereby a user of the system could indicate that a particular soft good is unsuitable (i.e., quarantined)).

Fletcher, however, fails to expressly disclose the system of claim 8, wherein the interface communicates to the system database an identification of the [*quarantined*] soft goods.

Nevertheless, this feature, as aforementioned, is old and well known, as evidenced by Otworth. In particular, Otworth discloses the system of claim 8, wherein the interface communicates to the system database an identification of the quarantined soft goods (Otworth: par. [0222]; Fig. 16).

One of ordinary skill would have found it obvious at the time of the invention to combine the teachings of Otworth (e.g., quarantining, in particular) with the teachings of Fletcher (e.g., interfaces, having various inventory fields, operably connected to the system computer) with the motivation of more efficiently monitoring and controlling inventories of products (e.g., soft goods) (Otworth: par. [0028]).

(C) As per original claim 10, Fletcher discloses the system claim 8, wherein the blood component collection soft good is selected from a group consisting of blood component collection kit (Fletcher: par. [0022], [0071], [0192], and [0315]) (Examiner considers a barcode, needle, receptacle bag, tubing set, and blood containers, among other soft goods to read on "blood component collection kit.").

Examiner has noted insofar as claim 10 recites "selected from a group consisting of blood component collection kit, a blood component collection solution, and a blood component collection transfer pack," a blood component collection kit has been recited.

(D) As per original claim 11, Fletcher discloses the system of claim 8, wherein the interface further comprises a reader being operably connected to the system computer for receiving an operator identifier and transmitting the operator identifier to the system computer, and for receiving separate input of a blood component soft good identifier and transmitting the blood component soft good identifier to the system database (Fletcher: par. [0022], [0059], [0071], [0079], [0083], and [0125]).

In short, Fletcher teaches a system replete with a myriad of identifiers (e.g., operator identifiers, instrument/device/identifiers, donor identifiers, soft good identifiers, inventory identifiers, etc.) being received and transmitted by the system computer in conjunction with an array of peripheral devices (e.g., barcode readers, scanners, cameras, etc.) (Fletcher: par. [0022], [0059], [0071], [0079], [0083], and [0125]).

(E) As per original claim 12, Fletcher discloses the system of claim 11, wherein the operator identifier and a blood component collection soft good identifier are received from a location proximate the blood component collection instrument (Fletcher: par. [0022], [0058], [0059], [0079], [0083], and [0125]).

(F) As per original claim 13, Fletcher discloses the system claim 8, wherein the system database is integral with the system computer (Fletcher: par. [0057] and [0058]).

In fact, Fletcher teaches multiple system configurations including, but not limited to, one where the system database can be included therein (i.e., integral within the computer), one where the system database is positioned in close proximity with the system computer (i.e., integral to the computer system), and one where the system database is located remotely (i.e., integral to the computer system network) (Fletcher: par. [0057] and [0058]).

(G) As per original claim 14, Fletcher discloses the system of claim 8, further comprising a blood component collection donor identifier corresponding to a blood

component donor, wherein the blood component collection donor identifier is transmittable to the system computer for storing the blood component collection donor identifier in the memory and for associating the blood component collection donor identifier with at least one of the blood component collection soft good identifier and the blood collection instrument identifier (Fletcher: par. [0022], [0068], [0124], [0125], [0142] and [0159]; Fig. 2A-6M).

(H) As per original claim 15, Fletcher discloses the system of claim 8, wherein the blood component collection instrument further comprises a blood component collection instrument identifier (Fletcher: par. [0159]; Fig. 4A).

(I) As per original claim 16, Fletcher discloses the system claim 8, wherein the interface utilizes radio frequency to transmit to the system computer (Fletcher: par. [0059]).

In fact, Fletcher teaches an open computer system architecture that may leverage a broad assortment of interface transmission means including cable, satellite, and energy wave communication, among other transmission means (Fletcher: par. [0059]).

(J) As per original claim 17, Fletcher discloses the system of claim 8, further comprising:

(a) a system communication conduit for operably connecting the system computer to the blood component collection instrument (Fletcher: par. [0012]); and,

(b) a system communication protocol for facilitating communication on the communication conduit between the system computer and the blood component collection instrument (Fletcher: par. [0030]).

(K) As per original claim 18, Fletcher discloses the system of claim 17, wherein the system communication protocol is Ethernet (Fletcher: par. [0030]).

(L) As per original claim 19, Fletcher discloses the system of claim 17, wherein the system communication protocol is TCP/IP (Fletcher: par. [0030] and [0194]).

(M) As per original claim 20, Fletcher discloses the system of claim 17, further comprising:

(a) a network server being operably connected to the system computer via a network communication conduit (Fletcher: par. [0012] and [0065]); and

(b) a web interface being operably connected to the system computer for facilitating access to the blood component collection process, wherein the interface receives data from the system computer (Fletcher: par. [0033] and [0194]).

(N) As per original claim 21, Fletcher discloses the system of claim 20, further comprising a web server being operably connected to the system computer and operably responsive to a web browser wherein the information stored in the system computer can be accessed (Fletcher: par. [0033] and [0194]).

(O) As per original claim 22, Fletcher discloses the system of claim 20, wherein the interface comprises a reader having at least one of a touch pad (Fletcher: par. [0057]).

Examiner has noted insofar as claim 22 recites "at least one of a touch pad, a keypad, an optical scanner, and a magnetic scanner" a touch pad has been recited.

(P) As per original claim 23, Fletcher discloses the system of claim 8, wherein the system database further comprises separate inventory data for each of a plurality of different types of soft goods (Fletcher: par. [0011] and [0166]; Figs. 2A-6M).

Examiner notes that Fletcher specifically teaches capturing, tracking, editing, printing, manipulating, measuring, modifying, calculating, transmitting, and receiving various soft goods (e.g., various blood component solutions, such as plasma, red blood cells, etc.; blood collection kits including needles, blood collection bags, etc.) inventory data pertinent to the blood collection process (Fletcher: par. [0011] and [0166]; Figs. 2A-6M).

(Q) As per original claim 24, Fletcher discloses the system of claim 23, wherein the plurality of different types of soft goods is a blood component collection kit (Fletcher: par. [0022], [0071], [0192], and [0315]) (Examiner considers a barcode, needle, receptacle bag, tubing set, and blood containers, among other soft goods to read on "blood component collection kit.").

Examiner has noted insofar as claim 24 recites "selected from group consisting of a blood component collection kit, a blood component collection solution, and a blood component collection transfer pack" a blood component collection kit has been recited.

(R) As per original claim 25, Fletcher discloses the system of claim 8, wherein the blood component soft good inventory data is modified in response to the receipt of the blood component soft good identifier transmitted from the interface (Fletcher: par. [0022], [0084], [0125] and [0166]; Figs. 2A-6M).

(S) As per original claim 26, Fletcher discloses the system of claim 25, wherein the system computer generates a notification when the blood component soft good inventory data is modified to a value which is lower than a predetermined value (Fletcher: par. [0314]) (Examiner considers blood component collection solutions (e.g., plasma solutions, red blood cell solutions, etc.) to read on "blood component soft good."

(T) As per original claim 27, Fletcher discloses the of claim 26, wherein the notification comprises providing a reorder option corresponding to the blood component

soft good associated with the blood component soft good identifier (Fletcher: par. [0195]).

(U) As per original claim 28, Fletcher discloses the system of claim 27, wherein the notification is transmitted to a remote access service for restocking blood component soft good inventory (Fletcher: par. [0195] and [0314]).

(V) As per original claim 29, Fletcher discloses the system of claim 8, further comprising a blood component collection kit having a plurality of blood component collection soft goods (Fletcher: par. [0022], [0056], [0063], [0071], [0192], [0195], [0395]) (Examiner considers a blood component (e.g., platelets, red blood cells, stem cells, white blood cells, plasma) to read on "blood component collection soft good.")

(W) As per original claim 30, Fletcher discloses the system of claim 29, wherein the blood component collection kit comprises a blood component container, a hypodermic needle, a blood component sample container, and a label (Fletcher: par. [0022], [0071], [0192], and [0315]).

Examiner considers a barcode (i.e., label), needle, receptacle bag (i.e., blood component container, blood component sample container), tubing set, and blood containers (i.e., sample container), among other soft goods to read on "blood component collection kit."

(X) Currently amended claim 31 differs from system claim 8 by reciting "[a] computer readable medium having computer program code stored thereon..." within its preamble. As per these elements, Fletcher's system and method for managing inventory of blood component collection soft goods includes computers, data storage devices, communication devices, server systems, network systems and software applications running in conjunction with various hardware devices (Fletcher: par. [0020], [0031], [0032] and [0057]). As such, it is readily apparent that Fletcher's system and method for managing the inventory of blood collection soft goods is controlled by a computer program stored upon a computer-readable medium.

The remainder of claim 31 substantially repeats the same limitations of claim 8 and is therefore, rejected for the same reasons given for claim 8 above and incorporated herein.

(Y) Original claims 32-42 substantially repeat the same limitations of claims 9-12, 14-15 and 25-28, and are therefore, rejected for the same reasons given for those claims.

(Z) Currently amended claim 43 differs from system claim 8 by excluding hardware and software elements, namely, "a blood component collection instrument," "a system computer being operably connected to the blood collection instrument," "the system computer running a blood component collection application," "a system database having a blood component collection soft good inventory," and "an interface being operably connected to the system computer, the interface having a quarantine field." The

method merely repeats the underlying process steps of system claim 8 and thus, merely repeats the same limitations of claims 8 and is therefore, rejected for the same reasons given for claim 8 above and incorporated herein.

(AA) Original claims 44-54 substantially repeat the same limitations of claims 9-12, 14-15 and 25-28, and are therefore rejected for the same reasons given for those claims.

Response to Arguments

4. Applicant's arguments filed 6/30/06 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Applicant's arguments will be addressed hereinbelow in the order in which they appear in the response filed 6/30/06.

(A) On pages 12-13 of the 6/30/06 response, Applicant argues that Fletcher does not fairly teach or suggest the invention claimed in claims 8-54. More specifically, Applicant argues that Fletcher does not fairly disclose or teach a system database with an inventory of blood component collection soft goods (claim 8), such as a blood component collection kit, a blood component collection solution, and a blood component collection transfer pack (claim 10). Applicant argues further that Fletcher does not teach a system computer with a quarantine field for indicating that at least a portion of

the blood component collection soft goods is quarantined (claim 8). In short, Applicant argues that Fletcher is not concerned with quarantining of unsuitable soft goods.

In response, Examiner respectfully submits that the combined teachings of Fletcher and Otworth do indeed teach the features of Applicant's invention and therefore, render Applicant's claimed invention obvious.

First, Fletcher teaches an inventory feature relating to the blood collection process, albeit focusing primarily on the inventory of collected blood/blood components. Nevertheless, Examiner notes that because Fletcher teaches collecting blood/blood components into a blood collection soft good (e.g., bag), the blood collection soft good is in essence being inventoried as well. Lending credence to this assertion is the further teaching of Fletcher that the unit number (i.e., inventory identification code) may be comprised of "the bag identifiers" (i.e., soft good identifiers) (See Fletcher: par. [0056], [0057], [0063], and [0125]).

Second, Examiner has relied on the Otworth reference, rather than the Fletcher reference, to address Applicant's "quarantining" feature. For example, Otworth teaches "monitoring and controlling *inventories* of products used in the conduct of diagnostic testing," the products being "sample[s], which [are] input to a test *kit*," and *quarantining* the products that "should be isolated from human contact due to...contamination or disease" (Emphasis added; see Otworth: par. [0028], [0046], [[0200], and [0222]). Examiner considers these Otworth teachings coupled with the teachings of Fletcher to be sufficient to render Applicant's claimed invention obvious.

Third, although Fletcher may not be concerned with quarantining of unsuitable soft goods *per se*, Examiner considers the teachings of Fletcher and Otworth *in toto* to be sufficient to render Applicant's claimed invention obvious, as mentioned above.

(B) On pages 13-15 of the 6/30/06 response, Applicant argues in more detail that Fletcher is not concerned with a system database with an inventory of blood component collection soft goods, nor with a system computer with a quarantine field for indicating that at least a portion of the blood component collection soft goods is quarantined, as recited in Applicant's currently amended claim 8.

Examiner respectfully submits these arguments have been adequately addressed in section 4. (A), *supra*, and incorporated herein.

(C) On page 15 of the 6/30/06 response, Applicant argues that the cited paragraphs of Fletcher (i.e., Fletcher: par. [0022], [0083], [0125], and [0162]) have nothing to do with an identification of quarantined soft goods. Applicant argues further that Otworth does not cure this deficiency.

In response, Examiner respectfully submits that these paragraphs were cited to reject Applicant's recitation of "identification of the soft goods" (i.e., blood containers, kits, and the like). Examiner notes that Fletcher, within the aforementioned paragraphs, teaches, *inter alia*, identification of tubing sets, collection bags/containers, needles, *etc.* (i.e., items comprising a kit). Examiner notes further that the feature of claim 8

pertaining to "quarantining" was addressed in section 4. (A), *supra*, via the Otworth reference.

As such, these Fletcher citations are pertinent and do indeed deal with an identification of quarantined soft goods.

(D) On page 15 of the 6/30/06 response, Applicant argues that Fletcher does not teach providing separate inventory data for each of the plurality of different types of soft goods, modifying such inventory data, generating a notification when the inventory is below a predetermined value, providing a reorder option for the soft goods, transmitting the reorder option to a remote access service for restocking, or communicating an identification of the quarantined soft goods to the system database, as recited in Applicant's claims 23, 25-28, 39-42, 44 and 51-54. Applicant argues further that Otworth does not cure this deficiency.

In response, Examiner respectfully submits that the combined teachings of Fletcher and Otworth do teach/render obvious these aforementioned limitations as discussed in section 3, *supra*.

(E) On pages 15-16 of the 6/30/06 response, Applicant rehashes claim 8 arguments to address the rejection of claims 31 and 43. As such, Examiner incorporates herein the counter arguments presented in section 4. (A), *supra*.

(F) On pages 17-19 of the 6/30/06 response, Applicant argues that the Otworth reference is inconsistent with the present invention as claimed in claims 8-54. More specifically, Applicant argues that Otworth does not relate to any blood component collection procedures as recited in Applicant's claims 8-54 and thus, there is no reason that one skilled in the art would be led to combine Fletcher with Otworth. Applicant argues further that the combination of Fletcher and Otworth teach away from the present invention and make it non-obvious.

In response, Examiner notes that obviousness can only be established by combining or modifying the teachings of the prior art to produce the claimed invention where there is some teaching, suggestion, or motivation to do so found either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art. See *In re Fine*, 837 F.2d 1071, 5 USPQ2d 1596 (Fed. Cir. 1988)and *In re Jones*, 958 F.2d 347, 21 USPQ2d 1941 (Fed. Cir. 1992).

In this case, Otworth does indeed relate to blood collection procedures. For example, Otworth teaches a bodily substance sample collection procedure (i.e., blood collection procedure) whereby the "sample may comprise a bodily substance, such as, *blood*, urine, fecal matter, or saliva" (Emphasis added) (Otworth: par. [0200]). Otworth also teaches "monitoring and controlling inventories of products used in the conduct of diagnostic testing" (Otworth: par. [0028]) – Examiner notes it is well known in the blood collection art to utilize blood collection soft goods (e.g., needles, bags, *etc.*) to acquire a blood sample to subsequently perform diagnostic tests on, as such, Examiner interprets Otworth's teaching of "monitoring and controlling inventories of products used in the

conduct of diagnostic testing" to include blood collection soft goods. Lastly, Otworth teaches that a sample (e.g., blood collected within a blood collection soft good, such as, a bag) acquired and deemed to be hazardous (e.g., contaminated, polluted, testing positive for disease, etc.) is quarantined (Otworth: par. [0222]).

In response to applicant's argument that Otworth is nonanalogous art, it has been held that a prior art reference must either be in the field of Applicant's endeavor or, if not, then be reasonably pertinent to the particular problem with which the Applicant was concerned, in order to be relied upon as a basis for rejection of the claimed invention. See *In re Oetiker*, 977 F.2d 1443, 24 USPQ2d 1443 (Fed. Cir. 1992). In this case, Otworth does deal with the field of Applican'ts endeavor (i.e., blood collection). Moreover, Otworth is reasonably pertinent to the particular problem with which Applicant was concerned (i.e., quarantining hazardous items).

In conclusion, Examiner respectfully submits that a skilled artisan would be led to combine Fletcher with Otworth and that these two references do not teach away from Applicant's present invention.

(E) On page 19 of the 6/30/2006 response, Applicant argues that no specific grounds of rejection of claim 54 were set forth.

In response, Examiner respectfully submits that claim 54 substantially repeats the same limitations of claim 28 and therefore, was rejected for the same reasons given for claim 28, as outlined in section 3. (AA), *supra*.

Conclusion

5. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

6. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Mike Tomaszewski whose telephone number is (571)272-8117. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 7:00 am - 3:30 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Joseph Thomas can be reached on (571)272-6776. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

MT

JOSEPH THOMAS
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER